HANKOW'S GREATEST FLOOD CATASTROPHE IN A CENTURY



HUPEH FLOOD RELIEF COMMITTEE

Head Office: Hankow Chamber of Commerce
Hankow, China.

HUPEH FLOOD RELIEF COMMITTEE

湖北水災急赈會

地點: 淡口總商會

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Please send all contributions to the Tre Mr. Hoh Hen-fu, Chairman of the Commerce, Hankow, China.

HANKOW'S GREATEST FLOOD CATASTROPHE IN A CENTURY

Hankow is always a hot spot, — hot in climate, hot in political disputes, and hot in business pursuits. But the summer of 1931 has changed all these conditions, and Hankow is now a cool flooded city with the resemblances of a

vast lake.

During the early weeks of the summer, rains kept falling steadily. Day after day this continued until the people almost forgot the heat of the Hankow Summer. But it did not rain in Hankow alone. These heavy rains were common throughout the entire Yangtse Valley. The waters of the river rose until they came to the unprecedented level of 53'.65'. The highest level reached in 1870, according to available records, was 50 feet and 5 inches. The results of this unusual rise of the river was the inundation of almost the entire floor of the great Yangtse Valley with devastation and destruction never before equalled in this century.

A bird's eye view of the situation taken on an air-plane trip from Shanghai to Hankow revealed almost nothing but destitution in the entire Yangtse Valley. In many places the flood stretched from horizon to horizon. It has been estimated that the waters are 35 miles wide for a distance of 600 miles. Almost nothing is visible except a few trees and some roof tops. This means that much of the richest ricebearing territory of China will produce nothing this year.

The farmers in the flooded areas are quite destitute. Millions of these people have lost their homes. Many thousands have been drowned, and countless thousands are in a desperate condition. No one will ever know what this catastrophe has cost in lives and in property. It is certain that the cost has been very great as thousands of square miles were so badly inundated that only those inhabitants who had boats were able to save themselves from drowning.

Conditions are bad enough but they will get progressively worse, because great numbers of people will have to face the winter without homes, food, and clothing. Also, the farmers have neither seeds for planting nor livestock for working their farms. Take Hupeh Province alone as an example. Out of sixty-nine Hsiens (districts) forty-five have been inundated and thirty-nine of them are almost completely ruined. This shows what has happened to the entire Yang-tse Valley.

The populous Metropolis of Wuhan (including the three sister cities of Hankow, Wuchang and Hanyang), the so-called Chicago of China, and now the Venice of China, has been suffering from more water than this region has known at any time within the last sixty-one years. Due to the swollen state of the river and heavy rainfall in the early part of July, all the low-lying districts of Hankow were flooded.

With the bursting on July 28th of the dyke at Fenchengio, a little distance below the Japanese Concession, the water in the Yangtse found its way to the inner side of the railway embankment. Then Hankow itself soon began to face a serious threat of flood. All its surrounding area was inundated. The whole district became a huge lake, with only roofs of dwelling houses visible. The flood covered a vast territory extending from Liuchiamiao to Chiakow. In fact, the entire Hou Ho land behind the railway track was inundated rendering thousands of poor people homeless. Immediately the railway track was packed with refugees and traffic on this section of Peiping-Hankow Railway had stopped.

In the early morning of August 2nd, by the breaking of the dam blocking the railway arch above Hankow, behind the Hankow Benevolent Society, the water of Hou Ho region found its way into the Hankow city proper, the S. A. D. No. 3, the S. A. D. No. 2 and the French Concession. Then all the flood sufferers poured into the business quarters of the city to find refuge. Boats commandeered by the government or engaged by benevolent organizations were everywhere carrying refugees from scenes of catastrophe.

The flood had now reached practically every part of the city except the S. A. D. No. 1 and the Japanese Concession. The Japanese Concession and S. A. D. No. 1 were not affected by the inrushing flood at this time not because these places were higher than other districts but simply because they had made an effective effort to build dams and had kept the water out. They had done splendid work and their efforts so far were successful. But after all human effort this

time was not able to conquer nature and these last dry areas were soon flooded.

On August 16th, the watermark at Hankow reached its peak, registering 53'.65", exactly three feet and one inch higher than in 1870. The water remained steady for several days, before it began to recede in very slow degree - about half an inch or one inch in every twenty four hours. At this rate it would take weeks before the water would go back to the normal river height. All densely populated districts in Hankow were now submerged, making further thousands of reople homeless and destitute.

The worse hit places are those behind the Water Tower, the Chisen Maloos, the Chungshan Road, Customs House, Tachimen Station and the Japanese Concession-Looking down from the top of the Turtle's Hill at Hanvang. one could see a vast stretch of water at the back of Hankow. The Chinese Race Club, the Union Hospital, the International Race Club, and the Hankow Race Club and Recreational Ground with its trees. factory chimneys and other main buildings in that section are well under water. The Chungshan Park is invisible, all its buildings and trees being submerged. On Chisen San Maloo the water has reached almost to the roof of the Hankow Municipal Building. All the streets. have been converted into canals along which sampans or boats and even big junks are busily plying instead of rickshas and motor vehicles. In normal times, there are 8685 rickshas and several hundred other vehicles running on these streets, but because of the high flood in their stead over 10,000 boats have been given permits by the Boat Commission Office to carry on traffic on these streets. The sight of these boats plying on the streets carrying pedestrians is an experience unprecedented in the life of the Hankow people. Traffic is seriously hampered.

Much inconvenience and damage have been caused by the flooding of houses and shops. Practically all shops have closed their doors and business is at a complete standstill. The electric power companies in the Japanese Concession and S. A. D. No. 1 were put out of commission. throwing these places into darkness for about three weeks. Telephone lines have been effected again and the Post Office has only been able to maintain a skeleton service. Hankow is now a city of stark horror. The city will take several years to recover from the extensive damage.

All the refugees in Hankow were removed to Wuchang and Hanyang, where they are put up in churches, schools, public buildings and refugee camps which were built on the hills for the purpose. All the residential quarters in Hankow ere deserted, and the houses are unoccupied, as the people have left for other scenes and only such people as are needed for business reasons remained.

People rendered homeless in the Wuhan area alone by the flooding are about half a million: Hankow 230,000, Wuchang 50,000, and Hanyang 30,000, over 30,000 ricksha coolie refugees and 100,000 wharf coolie refugees. More than \$2,000,000 raised locally has already been spent by Relief Committees for relief work in this center.

Now the peak of the flood has passed, but it must be remembered that continuous assistance in the flooded areas is absolutely necessary, as countless thousands of refugees have lost their homes, their animals, crops and relatives, and they must be fed and cared for until the new crops have been harvested next Summer. The immediate conditions are very serious, but they will be progressively more serious as time passes. Though immediate danger to the lives of the hundreds of thousands of residents of the flood districts has passed, yet the peak of the suffering will be reached with the advent of cold winter weather. Appalling conditions of refugees are so threatening, that all the local relief agencies in the Wuhan center are working at their best. For the first time in the history of Chinese flood relief work, all agencies Chinese and Foreign, Public and Private are working in a united campaign to meet the flood situation.

This photographic record of the flood disaster prepared by the Hupeh Flood Relief Committee serves as a kind of urgent appeal to the people of the world for immediate

material assistance.

Paul R. Sung

September, 1931 Hankow

WATERMARKS IN HANKOW

Zero 11-94 metres above sea level

August	1930	1931
1st.	27.4"	49.7"
2nd.	27.5'	49.8'
3rd.	28.0"	49.9"
4th.	28.7	50.05"
5th.	30.0"	50.0"
6th.	31.2	50.1"
7th.	32.5	50.25'
Sth.	33.2	50.45
Sth.	33.5	50.55"
10th.	33.5"	50.65*
11th.	33.6"	50.6"
12th.	33.0'	50.6"
13th.	33.2"	51.2'
14th.	33.1	51.8'
15th.	33.0"	50.0"
16th.	32.7	52.7'
17th.	32 .5'	53.2'
18th.	32.3'	53.4"
19th.	32.3"	53.65' New Record
20th.	32.3"	53.25'
21st.	32 .4"	53.45'
22nd.	32.8"	53.40"
23rd.	33.4"	53.3"
24th.	33.7'	53.25'
25th.	33.7	53.0"
26th.	33.3"	52.95"
27th.	32.0"	52.35"
28th	32.9"	52.8'
29th.	33 .2"	52.7
20th.	33.8"	52,5"
Sist.	34.2"	52.3"

WATERMARKS IN HANKOW

September	1930	1931
1st.	35.2"	52.1"
2nd.	26.1	51.8"
3rd.	36.0"	51.5"
4th.	36 .8"	51.4"
5th.	36 ,9"	51.25
6th.	37.2"	51.2"
7th.	37.4"	51.1'
Sth.	37.7	51.15
9th.	37.9"	51.15"
10th.	37.6"	51.15
11th.	37.5	51.0"
12th.	37.9"	50.8"
13th.	38.2"	50.7"
14th.	28.7	50,45"
15th.	39,0"	50.1"
16th.	29 .4"	49.85
17th.	39.7	49.6"
18th.	39.9"	49.3'
19th.	39.9"	49.0"
20th.	39.7"	48.7
21st.	29.7	48.4"
22nd.	39.2"	48.1'
23rd.	38.8"	47.8"
24th.	38.9"	47.5"
25th.	38.9"	47.25
26th.	38.7	47.0"
27th.	38 ,4"	46,8"
28th.	38.1"	46,6'
29th.	37.9"	
30th.	37.8"	

HANKOW RAIN - FALL RECORDS

July,	1911	 8.86	inches
**	1912	 13.48	81
20	1913	 4.57	
20	1914	 0.22	100
**	1915	 6.95	
	1916	 9.20	-
	1917	 9,60	
21	1918	 4.75	10
	1919	 8.68	
	1920	 2.34	210
81	1921	 3.02	
	1922	 2.88	
	1923	 8,06	
	1924	 11.57	
**	1925	 2.52	
**	1926	12.40	
	1927	12.58	
	1928	2.89	**
	1929	 4.95	117
**	1930	 0.14	
	1931	 22.18	
100	1521	 66.18	100

Report of Flood Condition In 45 Hsiens Of Hupeh

Name of District	Number of People affected	Urgent Relief needed	Area Flooded Square Kilometre
Hankow city	758,169	250,000	483
Wuchang	367,477	250,000	6,135
Hanyang	479,426	250,000	6,848
Yunmeng	149,568	90,000	1,495
Sinkan	347,647	130,000	8,359
Tsienkiang	317,953	230,000	4,572
Micnyang	826,283	390,000	18,785
Hanchwan	356,138	200,000	5,184
Kwangtsi	236,001	130,000	2,735
Hwangmei	217,505	130,000	4,075
Shihshow	124,909	90,000	4,379
Tienmen	569,645	200,000	6,589
Kingchow	496.089	180,000	9,316
Ocheng	307,043	130,000	4,728
Kienli	372,003	280,000	7,841
Yingcheng	137,466	80,000	2,127
Kishui	213,589	130,000	3,848
Hwangkang	412,101	180,000	5,314
Yangsin	180,184	70,000	4,656
Kichow	214,835	100,090	3,266
Taych	156,140	50,000	2,372
Kiayn	67,145	60,000	2,188
Hwangnei	294,289	110,000	3,836
Sienning	55,871	30,000	1,688
Chihkang	118,859	40,000	2,016
Sungtze	224,173	100,000	4,396
Macheng	215,246	90,000	4,221
Kingshan	238,000	70,000	5,550
Anlu	56,161	50,000	1,087
Kungan	105,734	60,000	2,333
Chungsiang	170,912	40,000	7,605
Puchi	35,152	20,000	1,196
Kingmen	188,288	80,000	4,554
Siuchow	74,842	50,000	3,690
Yunyang	43,855	30,000	2,750
Tangyang	33,770	30,000	850
Itu	62,228	40,000	1,485
Tsungyang	20,756	15,000	782
Lotien	22,670	10,000	793
Changyang	19,518	10,000	1,243
Kucheng	36,631	10,000	079
Nanchang	43,294	10,000	1,475
Siangyang	73.014	30,000	1,409
Tunscheng	20,200	15,000	458
Funchow	28,417	10,000	1,302
Wufung	6,446	10,000	1,236
	9,475,720	4,560,000	177,236







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Report of

Name of District

Hankow city

Wuchang

Panyang.

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Lird's Eve View of Main Street in Hankow, Chungshan Road.



The Harlaw Manifest Government helling which is a three storted structure, has now only second floor above water.



Hankow Chamber of Commerce. Water is seeping into the ground floor of this building, the foundation of which is about a feet higher than the Chungshan Road. The Hupeh Flood Relief Committee has had to remove its quarters to the second floor.

茨民朱皂楼上·芬屋後由老D洪



The place where the water washed away the railway track. Many sampans were engaged to take the poor people away,

类是二的女儿没干生作用的复数淡



In this entire area the houses are flooded almost to the thatch of the roofs and all the householders are non-refugees. Dogs are seen on the roofs waiting their fate.



Melotto Memorial Hospital

These buildings are built with a high basement as a pafeguard against such an occurrance but the abnormal height of the river makes it only possible for the patients to live on the tun floor.



With water reaching the caves the people have opened the tiles on thatch of the roofs, put up a few yards of cloth to keep off the sun, made small platforms of bamboo and they are waiting their fate.



Leaving home with water to the caves



Refugees in the New World Amusement House. The upper floors of this building are housing 5,000 refugees who crowded in at the beginning of the flood. It was almost impossible to walk about without treading or human beings.



All the houses near the ranks at track are flooded to the cases.



The refugees who had been camping on the railway embankment since the beginning of the flood were forced to move to Wuchang on account of the submerging of the railway track.



Hankow Race Club & Recreaton Ground

The water submerged the buildings to the veranda Looking out on all sides one could see only vast stretch of water where formerly everything was green.



Fince the calamity started more than 20,000 refugees crowded on the railway track.



Refugees along railway embankment receive food from relief boats. The food being distributed is bread. It is taken around at moon time and the sight of thousands of people, fighting for their portions is a terrible sight to behold. There are many sampless distributing rice, medicine and tea.



At the Union Hospital where the land is very low the water was over 12 feet deep and the patients had to be moved to the upper floor,



A sheet of water is the only visible scene around the city



Hankow Bund
Practically all the higher buildings along the Bund are flooded to the groundfloor. The Bund was overflooded and all roadways are under water nearly six feet.



Shipping pervices were seriously affected by the flood disaster, Goods shipped to Hankon cannot be unloaded owing to the flood situation. Turboats have to be used an temporary warchouses for the cargoes from Shanghai and other ports.



The bottom floor of these buildings are still fleaded with several feet of stagnant water with a dreadful smell,



Conditions were had in all areas affected by the flood, but Chungshan Road appeared to suffer the most.



Many people built sammans out of both tubs, sinanotte boxes, oil tin boxes, and adds and ends, to move around.



Summons are being employed to collect bodies by the Red Cross Society. The bodies of those drowned in the first onrush are now coming to the surface and are appearing at all odd places some being found even in the street.



Many from the poorer class are to be seen trying to "hoof" their way through chin high water to their destination.



Special sampans were provided for conveying people who cannot afford to pay a fare. These boats were seen on the busy streets nicking up coolies walking in the water.



At the Post Office with water over the counters, a good deal of hard work and ingenuity has had to be used to get the mad away.



Floating Post Office,

As all the pillar boxes were under water, the Postal Authorities devised a method with which to overcome the Extraordinary difficulty. A fleet of Sampans was put into operation along the business atreets to collect mails from business houses.



Floating and travelling Clinics
A squad of special sampans were dispersed throughout the cities, each carrying a doctor and several nurses to make sujections. Free inoculation against cholera typhoid and paratyphoid and other epidemic diseases was available on the sport.



Honghong & Shanghai Banking Corporation, the Entire stone basement is under water about 7 feet, and the stone fence at the front of the grand building it well under water.



The Peiping Hankow railway embankment near Hankow was completely submerged and traffic was stopped for weeks.



Black Hill or "Velley of Death"

A physician describing the horrors of the situation in the refugee camp says that the refugees are "quietly dying of hunger," "the dead are thrown in main a little way off and some few were coffined and earth thrown over, in many "huts" are dying and newly dead," "One hears a moaning from the noman and one need hardly to see what has come about."



American Consulate and the Bund in S. A. D. No. 2



National City Bank of New York can only be approached by nampans. Water here is more than 7 feet deep.



Jardine Estate
Of all the buildings in this section, practically all are flooded to the ceiling, and many have water in their second floors,



The flord waters are causing many houses to collapse. This is a hotel situated opposite the Telegraph Office which crumbled being unable to stand the pressure of the rising water. As the debris has not yet been removed, it is not possible to know the number of casualties.



N. K. K.

New stone building was under nearly 9 feet of water. The
street alongside was the first to assume a semblance of Venice.



St. John's Church at S. A. D. No. 3 The whole wooden fence surrounding the compound was under water about five feet deep.



Several thousands refugees are now staying in the Export installation of the Jardine, Matheson & Co. godown awaiting relief.



Sampan along the Sin-Sin Road near the Shangha' commercial & Savings Bank forms a common feature of the congested traffic.



The people have made odd boards into rafts and on these they make what trips are necessary to obtain food,



Deutsch-Asiatische Bank on the S. A. D. No. 1 Bund. The S. A. D. No. 1 or ex-German Concession shared the same fate and had all its streets submerged when the water overflowed its surrounding dams and the railway embankment.



These temporary wooden sidewalks were built under the auspices of the Relief Committee in the business sections of the city to relieve the Sampan Congestion.



As the water in the flooded streets decreases in depth rickshas which were put out of Commission about three weeks ago, are again making their appearance. But one has to sit on the top of the back of the vehicle.



Wuhan Garrison Headquarters, Note the gateguard on duty has to stand on the wall of the entrance.



To pareguard against disorderliness the Authorities are sending round pickets in sampans, there are strongly armed and some even carry machine guns ready for action.



Religious Tract Society S. A. D. No. 3



A surprisingly large nercent of the houses which are partly out of the water are unoccupied as the people have left for safe places.



During the period of high water, policemen on duty standing high on platforms at streets intersections,



Wuhan Gendarmeric Headquarters at the back of 8, Λ , D, No. 3 was the worst place hit by the flood,



Texas Oil Commany Installation Plant
Oil was seen shooting many feet into the air and then turned into flames. Even the heavy steel drums were thrown up-some hundred feet high. They exploded in the air and then landed in the flood water.



Hankow Club & S. A. D. No. 3 Municipal Building The S. A. D. No. 3 or Ex-British Concession was the one which suffered the worst, streets were under water in most places to six or eight feet.



The entire godown of the Texas Oil Company was a terrible formance. As the burning satroleum blowed down the river & spr ad with rapidity. Luckly on account of the flood all the touchbouring houses were execuated.



On the roof is to be seen the unferticate deg who has no place to go and there he is watching patiently for some one to rescue him.



Bankers Amoriation Building



Customs House



Hankow Herald Office wrecked by the floods, as practically all of the printing equipment is under water. Despite all the hardships and difficulties the Herald has put out a flood edition to keep the public in touch with developments,



Catholic Church at Ewo Road, S. A. D. No. 3.



Municipal Building S. A. D. No. 1



Chinese chain wheel pumps were nut up into operation at the French Municipal Office sate to draw water from the Street back into the river.



A Flooded Market.

An important develonment was that very little food was procurable in the market, Vegetables which were plenty before Wuchang was inundated, are now no more.



A. P. C. D. deang plong the Book.



Chinese Y. M. C. A.

The S. A. D. No. 2 or Ex-Russian Concession was in a little better state at the beginning of the flood, but when the water reached the climax, the atreet of the Chinese Y. M. C. A. being the highest noint in the city was inundated nearly 5 feet.



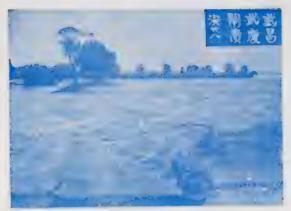
As the water goes higher and higher conditions of the refugees are passing from bad to worse. These refugees are moving from the railway track embankment to other higher places in the city.



From the commencement of the fload these troops, particularly the 18th division under General Pisu Yuan Chiang, have been kept busy to move materials and building dykea.



What file refuses are engaged here occurring every high place of vacant ground near the Wuchang City.



The broken part of the Wuching Cyke rear Wuchang cit). Note the rolling water rushing into the form nearby.





This shows a dam constructed immediately along the fore shore of Wechang, after the flood invaded Hankow, Hundreds of thousands of sandbags were rushed to the danger spot to prevent further breaks.



Wuchang
The district outside the North City-gate was five feet under water.



Wesley and the Union Normal Colleges are under water in the suburbs out ide the East-Gate of Wuchang City. Only the roofs of the higher houses can be seen and the water to so deep that a samean sole cannot reach the bottom.



The streets of Wuchang alongside the river are completely flooded. A long stretch of houses and shops along the river usually contains as many as ten thousand families, all these are engaged in the manufacture of chop-sticks which is one of the biggest industries of its kind in this city. These people took refuge on the nearby hill.



Refugee camp near the Wireless Station Official estimate is that the normal population of the Wuhan

Cities has been increased by 200,000 people who have come as refugees from other flooded Hugeh regions.

This camp was built on the waste ground surrounding the wireless station at Wuchang. It holds over 100 000 refusees.



First Primary School Although Wuchang is higher than Hankow, still there are a few places that are well under water,



On the Black Hill near Hanyang about 10,000 refugees were taken care of by the Restef Committee. These people have come as refugees from other flooded districts.

为是我们经外西小原在上至了一样好门只在我很



Yang-Haing district bordering the river, was under 14 feet of water, practically all the rice fields in this district were completely costroyed.

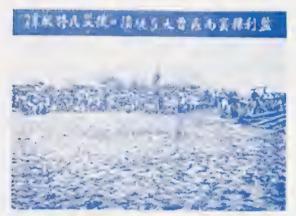
共上於木來應民失汉德制動變傷漢



The suburb of Hanyang alongside the Yangtse is completely submerged. A great stretch of houses along the river contains several thousands of families, all engaged in the timber business—these people have moved their matshed houses to the rafts.



All rice cross have been ruined and property damages are enormous in the suburbs around Wuchang,



Another place of severe suffering is Kienli, Refugees from the farm land rushed to the city for safety numbering 10,000 people



Itu Hsien one of the districts in Hupeh was hadly hit, 500,000 mons of corn A rice fields were submerged. Most of the dwelling houses built by mud in this district have collapsed as a result of the flood.



One by one the dyken are falling in the unpre-redented flood. This shows the dyke, which protects Hanyang, broken, rendered uscless for food production considerable area



The village around Wuchang is neveral feet under water and many of the houses have collapsed. Several of the inhabitants are reported to have been drowned.



lianuang Farms in the suburb ore entirely submerged in the water.



Generals Han Ymen Chain and Haia Tau Yin, the Flood Presention Directors, personally supervise the work at the different dyken and make every possible effort to save them. They have done splendid work and their efforts so far were successful. But after all human effort this time was not able to conquer nature and one by one the dykes broke by the unprecedented flood.

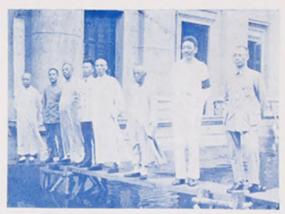


Kingkow a suburb of Wuchang Refugees eating indiancorn. Extensive measures are now being taken by the Relger Committee for handling the refugee problem.



General Chiang Kai-Shek,

President of the National Government, paid a visit to Wuhan, personally investigated the prevailing conditions created by the devastating floods,



General Ho Chen Chun... Chairman of the Flood Relief Committee

Mr. T. C. Chao Mr. P. C. Tsai

Mr. Chou Tao Mr. C. Y. Chen Mr. D. Y. Ma

Mr. Hoh Hen Fu

These people carry on their work every day but wonder how long these anxious days will last.



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